Movie Time

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Purpose

This activity uses film as a shared reflective medium through which participants can reflect together on psychological vulnerability, stigma, and recovery, without having to share their own personal story.

Through shared experience, reflection, and informal encounter (food/drinks), a safe space is created for empathy, recognition, and trust.

The selected films come from a pre-prepared list of relevant titles, carefully chosen to open up conversation about how psychological vulnerability becomes visible in society, relationships, care, and self-image.

The activity is grounded in social-psychological insights: eating together increases mutual trust (as is also applied in interviewing techniques and team building), and watching a film together creates a shared emotional frame of reference.

The film functions as a third conversation partner: no one is required to say anything about themselves, but participants are invited to give meaning to what has been seen.

Step-by-Step Plan

	Step:	**Instructions:**
1.	**Preparation:**	Choose a film together from the list of recommended films. Prepare the setting: a TV or projector, the film source, comfortable seating, a small table or tray with drinks, snacks, or light refreshments.
2	**Check-in:**	Explain that this film not only offers relaxation, but also invites reflection on psychological vulnerability, stigma, and connection. Ask participants to watch quietly, without judgement, and invite open reflection afterwards. For each film, also briefly explain why it may be sensitive. Use the Intensity Scale for this.
3	**Exercise:**	Start the film. The facilitator actively observes the group's reactions (visible emotion, laughter, tension). If necessary, include a short break halfway through for the toilet or for breathing space.
4	**Debriefing:**	Invite the group to have a snack or drink afterwards. This lowers the threshold for conversation and promotes social safety.

		Start with open questions: - What touched you? - What do you recognise from your work / life / care experiences? - How does this film show something about stigma or recovery? Allow space for both silence and speaking. Do not use forceful questions.
5	**Closing:**	Invite everyone (who wishes) to share one sentence: What am I taking with me from this moment? (If appropriate, complete the Intensity Scale together.)

Recommended Films

Film:	Themes:	Why?:	Duration:	Intensity:
American Sniper (2014)	Moral injury, family & war	Questions heroism and psychological harm after deployment	133 min	🔴
Rules of Engagement (2000)	Trauma, justice, leadership, and moral doubt	Good for conversations about justice, inner struggle, group pressure	128 min	🔴
Blade Runner (1982/2049)	Identity, humanity, consciousness	Asks “what makes us human?” philosophical, existential reflection	117 min / 164 min	🟡
Trainspotting (1996)	Addiction, destruction, friendship	Confronting, but recognisable for themes such as recovery and stigmatisation	94 min	🔴
The Sixth Sense (1999)	Trauma, grief, communication	In a subtle way recognisable in relation to psychological suffering and “not being heard”	107 min	🟡
The Truman Show (1998)	Control, autonomy, truth	Social metaphor: who decides over our lives? Good for a mental health care context	103 min	🟢
Joker (2019)	Stigma, marginalisation, psychosis	Powerful portrayal of how society creates and reinforces stigma	122 min	🔴

The Wolf of Wall Street (2013)	Addiction, greed, emptiness	Can work as a mirror for societal ideas of “success” versus emptiness	180 min	🔴
Good Will Hunting (1997)	Trauma, therapy, trust	Very suitable for themes such as relationship, trust, and self-development	126 min	🟡
American History X (1998)	Hatred, change, family	Powerful story of transformation, good for conversations about empathy	119 min	🔴
The Pianist (2002)	Survival, trauma, isolation	Subtle film about resilience and humanity in extreme circumstances	150 min	🔴
Seven (1995)	Morality, evil, justice	Dark, but good for discussing ethical boundaries and justice	127 min	🔴
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975)	Power, psychiatry, resistance	A must-see for any mental health care discussion. Critique of systems and care culture	133 min	🔴
Fight Club (1999)	Identity, psychosis, masculinity	Disturbed identity, dissociation, Disturbed group thinking, strongly symbolic	139 min	🔴
Shutter Island (2010)	Trauma, reality, memory	Well suited for reflection on perception, control, and self-image in mental health care	138 min	🔴
Cool Runnings (1993)	Perseverance, team spirit, humour	Light and motivating. Brings the group together in an accessible way. Inclusion and trust	98 min	🟢
A Beautiful Mind (2001)	Schizophrenia, stigma, love	Very suitable for destigmatisation and insight into living with psychological vulnerability	135 min	🟡
Patch Adams (1998)	Care, humanity, humour	Inspires care workers and service users alike: care with heart, not only with the mind	115 min	🟢

Instinct (1999)	Power, freedom, inner peace	Philosophical film about control versus surrender, reflection on views of humanity in care	126 min	🟡
Circle (2016)	Group dynamics, judgement, empathy	Strong metaphor for social pressure, stigma, and decision-making in groups	87 min	🟡

Intensity Scale

Intensity:	**Target Group:**	**Description:**
🟢 Safe	Accessible to any audience.	Light, approachable, connecting, or positive. Suitable for introductory sessions, mixed groups, or sensitive settings.
🟡 Stimulating	A deeper layer, but still accessible.	Contains psychological, philosophical, or emotional layers that invite reflection without becoming overwhelming.
🔴 Intense	Powerful films with possible emotional impact.	Confronting themes such as war, psychosis, stigmatisation, or violence. Suitable for strong groups where there is room for follow-up care.

This scale is based on James A. Russell's Circumplex Model of Affect. See the manual for further details.

Timeline

Preparation	5 – 15 minutes
Check-in	5 – 10 minutes
Exercise	90 – 180 minutes
Debriefing	30 – 60 minutes
Closing	5 – 10 minutes

Requirements

Materials:

What?:	**Quantity:**
Film, digital or DVD	Depending on group/theme
Projection and sound (TV and hi-fi)	1 set
Small table or tray with snacks and drinks	As desired

People / Facilitators:

At least 1 trained facilitator (care professional, coach, or educational staff member). This may be supplemented by an expert by experience or therapist for further depth or follow-up care.

Location:

A quiet room where a TV or projector is available, and where there is also space for discussion afterwards.

Evaluation

Team consultation: evaluation of the film

- How was the film experienced by the team?
- Where did you feel connection?

Completing the Intensity Scale:

1. Record the pre-determined level on the scale (if known).
2. Then indicate the level as experienced, based on feedback from patients.